

## Edwards,Michelle

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**From:** Elliott,Earl  
**Sent:** Friday, July 22, 2016 10:08 AM  
**To:** Ennis,Charles; Bennett,Duke A; Azar, George; Auler,Amy; Crossen,Martha; Nasser,Karrum; Nation,Todd; Don Morris; DeBaun,Curtis; Garrison,Neil; Edwards,Michelle  
**Subject:** Fw: Storm Water Drainage Fee

All, Mr. Myers gave me permission to forward his email. Here it is. Earl

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**From:** Nathan Myers <nagremy1980@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 15, 2016 1:57 PM  
**To:** Elliott,Earl  
**Subject:** Storm Water Drainage Fee

JUL 22 2016

CITY CLERK

Mr. Elliott,

I am writing as your constituent regarding the proposed storm water drainage fee ordinance. I attended the first part of the meeting last night, but was not able to stay for the entirety. Based on what I saw, it seems clear that some type of fee will need to be established to comply with the federal requirements. However, I, like many in Terre Haute, am very concerned about how the fee will affect churches and non-profits in this community. These institutions provide vital services to many of Terre Haute's least fortunate citizens, and we must be very careful about imposing an undue economic burden on them. I was left with some questions after last night's presentations:

1) It was indicated that the rates were set in such a way as to "take it easy" on residential properties. Were models considered that required residential property owners to pay more in order to alleviate some of the burden on non-residential properties?

2) Is it possible to separate out different types of non-residential properties and address them differently under the ordinance (i.e. treat businesses differently from churches/non-profits)?

3) To what degree has Terre Haute pursued grant funding from the federal government or other sources to help with the storm water mitigation project? Did the city lose out on any federal funds because we delayed taking action on the storm water problem?

4) Has the Council or anyone else looked at options to incentivize residents or non-residential property owners to take action to reduce their storm water contribution to the sewers in exchange for a reduction in their fees? For example, I saw some communities that offered economic incentives for property owners to plant trees, use storm water barrels, plant "water gardens," dig swales or take other actions to reduce water going into the sewers in exchange for a reduction in fees.

At minimum, I think any ordinance to create a storm water fee should contain a provision requiring the Council, the Sanitary District, and any other relevant city agencies to actively work with churches, non-profit groups, and others to help them reduce their impervious surface or otherwise reduce their contribution to the storm water problem. This could include fee reductions for taking certain actions or working with environmental agencies/non-profits to pursue grant funds. The Council should provide incentives to make new construction in Terre Haute environmentally sustainable. There is a center at ISU, the Center for Community Sustainability, that could provide expertise in this area.

It may be that the storm water fee is necessary, but simply levying this fee is not an environmentally or economically sustainable solution. We must also seek to protect our important institutions, like our spiritual centers and non-profits, as well as taking actions to mitigate our storm water problem and make ourselves more environmentally sustainable. If we are doing to levy this kind of fee on economically-strapped organizations, we must at least give them some chance to help themselves and alleviate that burden. It would be best for the whole community that we do.

Here are some links that may be of interest:

<http://www.straspres.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/WW-12-7.pdf>

<https://www.crd.bc.ca/education/our-environment/concerns/impervious-surfaces>

<http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities/images/stories/designman/sect3.pdf>

<http://www.deeproot.com/blog/blog-entries/cities-that-are-pioneers-in-developing-stormwater-credit-systems-for-trees>

[http://www.annistonstar.com/news/city-of-anniston-considers-ways-for-churches-nonprofits-to-reduce/article\\_3d44f3dc-b49f-11e4-a5a4-0b98997fedde.html](http://www.annistonstar.com/news/city-of-anniston-considers-ways-for-churches-nonprofits-to-reduce/article_3d44f3dc-b49f-11e4-a5a4-0b98997fedde.html)

<http://www.tv24.tv/#!Anniston-Stormwater-User-Fee-Modification/c1tj5/54e425e30cf23137e87e76bc>

In addition, based on the revelation about the 15% sewage fee increase at last night's council meeting, another outcome from this discussion must be more careful oversight by the council of all activities undertaken by the sanitation district. As the elected representatives of the people of Terre Haute, the Council must not be blindsided by actions taken by the administration. The Council should take official action in this area as well.

Thank you for your service and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathan Myers  
5475 Cannon Ct., Apt. D  
Terre Haute, IN 47803

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